Contents

What is CPD? 3
Who is CPD For? 4
Why do it? 5
Why is CPD Needed? 6
How can you get the most from your CPD? 7
Benefits of CPD to Industry 7
Industry Schemes 8
Sources of Support and Guidance for CPD 9-10
What is CPD?

Broadly, CPD (Continuing Professional Development) is any activity engaged in by a qualified professional through which they continue to develop professionally. This should maintain and enhance existing competences and help you to develop new knowledge and skills. CPD should not be exclusively about formal courses or qualifications (although these can be valuable elements), and may involve development in both technical and non-technical areas. It can include a wide variety of activities such as open learning, private study, work experience and more.

Often people engage in CPD without even realising – for example by attending seminars, engaging in research for a current project, learning from the advice of colleagues or even by reading a journal. If you’re a newly qualified professional, simply by continuing some of the activities you engaged in as part of your Initial Professional Development (IPD), you will now be engaging in CPD. So you might find it easier than you think to commit to a CPD plan.

CPD is about learning and development that enhances the participant’s effectiveness in their professional role. This should maintain and enhance existing competences as well as developing new knowledge and skills. It should not be exclusively about formal courses or qualifications (although these can be a valuable element of CPD), and may involve development in both technical and non-technical areas. CPD includes a wide variety of activities such as open learning, private study, work experience and many more.

Through the former CPD in Construction Group and CIC Training and CPD Panel, CIC members have defined CPD as the systematic maintenance, improvement and broadening of knowledge and skill, and the development of personal qualities necessary for the execution of professional and technical duties throughout your working life. This emphasises that, for a practitioner to work effectively, the structured development of knowledge, skills and personal qualities is essential. It further suggests that, once acquired, the same knowledge, skills and personal qualities must be methodically kept up-to-date to maintain them at an adequate level, as well as new knowledge and skills developed. This is a logical consequence of being a professional practitioner and acting with a duty of care. In a different context, we would feel unsure of entrusting ourselves to a medical practitioner who was not currently competent and unable to deal with the latest advances in medicine.

Often professionals engage in CPD without realising (for example by attending seminars, engaging in research and investigation in relation to a current project, learning from the advice of colleagues, even reading a journal). For newly qualified professionals continuing, or building upon some of the activities they engaged in as part of their IPD (Initial Professional Development), will be CPD. Therefore individuals who are not currently consciously engaged in CPD, might find it easier than they think to commit to a CPD plan – as they may already be doing CPD. However, if individuals plan, record, and review their CPD this will help them to give some structure to, and maximise the benefit of, their CPD. This will help ensure they engage in CPD activities which meet their needs.

CPD is sometimes seen as an ‘input’ process, measured in terms of minimum hours or points. This may result in individuals engaging in poorly planned activities with little motivation. This guidance seeks to raise awareness of the benefits of CPD which is planned to serve the needs of the individual professional and in turn satisfy the needs of their employer, clients, industry and society.

Who is CPD for?

Most Professional Institutions and other organisations who have individual professionals in membership, recommend, if not require, that their members engage in and record CPD. Institutions encourage CPD because they want to help their members to perform as well as possible, in order to maintain and improve their professional reputation and standing. This is often prescribed for members in Codes of Professional Conduct, which place an onus on the individual to act in an ethical and competent manner.

Businesses of all sizes (whether employing hundreds of people or one self employed professional) need knowledgeable competent people. Without engaging in appropriate CPD the workforce cannot hope to maintain competence let alone develop the knowledge and skills needed to adapt to changing business and client needs and make use of the latest technology and materials whilst conforming to ever changing legal and regulatory requirements.

Clients want to employ professionals who not only have up-to-date technical knowledge, but who also have the skills to complete a project on time and within budget, the communication skills to understand client needs, and a range of other competences needed to provide a good service. Again these are competences that CPD will help professionals to develop and maintain.

For individuals, maintenance and development of knowledge and competence helps ensure employability (by clients as well as employers). CPD can serve many other purposes (beyond satisfying the requirements of PIs, employers and clients) for example to provide the new skills and knowledge needed to manage staff, develop a business, specialise, meet ever changing legal and regulatory requirements, use the latest software or keep informed of new materials and working methods, or extend or redirect their career opportunities.
Why do it?

For many professionals, engagement in CPD is a requirement to maintain membership of one or more Professional Institutions – membership which is important to their professional standing. However, if you’re committed to your career, you should see CPD as the chance to maintain and build knowledge and competence for your own personal development rather than just as a chore to satisfy external requirements.

Pre-qualification education and IPD cannot provide all the knowledge and skills that you’ll need for your entire career. For example CPD could add to your knowledge of new regulations, or help you learn how to manage projects more effectively. Engagement in CPD can help you:

• Gain the knowledge and skills you need to specialise or move into a senior or managerial position.
• Develop the knowledge and skills required to work in the context of changing markets, technologies or legislation;
• Move into new employment areas in times of economic constraint;
• Gain or retain membership of a Professional Institution or similar body;
• As an employee - to maintain and gain competences so that you are more likely to be continuously employed;
• As a sole practitioner - to maintain and gain competences in order to remain self-reliant and provide a professional service.

It is hoped that all individual professionals understand the need to continually add to and update their knowledge and skills. Pre-qualification education and initial professional development cannot provide all the knowledge and skills that an individual will need for their entire career. Most professionals want to specialise and/or move into senior or managerial positions during their careers, as well as needing to develop the knowledge and skills needed to succeed in the context of changing markets, technologies, legislation etc.

Why is CPD needed?

Competent professionals, and the professional institutions that represent them, should already understand the importance of CPD – even if they do not currently label it as such. However, for those who do not fully understand the need for professionals to maintain and add to their knowledge and skills, or who want to know how to gain maximum value from CPD, the following may provide guidance and address some possible misunderstandings.

Drivers for change include:

• The impact of skill shortages in many occupations and levels in the construction industry – recent CIC professional services employer skills surveys indicated:
  • Management and communication skills gaps: Almost 50% of employers experienced problems with staff proficiency and skills gaps. There are significant issues identified by survey respondents relating to management, communication, literacy, problem solving, and client handling skills.
  • Technical and practical skills gaps: Despite nearly three-quarters of the professional services workforce being qualified to HNC or above, surveyed employers variously identified a range of skills and competence areas where capability was an issue – these include professional IT skills, processing and agreeing design schemes, surveys, procurement strategy and controlling construction operations.

• The incorporation of the various aspects of competence into contracts. For example, many clients use tender evaluation criteria which include assessment of competence; contracts exist which contain provision for project specific training; and clauses are already being used by some large clients to specify required individual and team competences along the supply chain. Early indications suggest it is potentially more useful to focus on the outputs that competence standards provide, rather than measuring the amount of training inputs.

• There is a loss of stability in employment. With increased use of short term contracts and consultancy working, and the impact of economic constraints, individuals need to take increasing responsibility for their own careers and development to maintain employability.

The CPD activities which an individual engages in are likely to be influenced by a combination of opportunities, interests, ambitions and needs. Opportunities and needs are both likely to be influenced by employers and professional institution(s), which in turn may be influenced by client and broader industry expectations.
How can you get the most out of your CPD?

If you plan, record, and review your CPD it will help to give some structure to, and maximise the benefits of, your activities. It will also ensure that you only engage in CPD activities which genuinely meet your needs.

The CPD activities which you engage in are likely to be influenced by a combination of opportunities, interests, ambitions and needs. These are likely to be influenced by employers and Professional Institutions, which in turn may be influenced by client and broader industry expectations.

Focusing on outputs (what competence or knowledge you develop) rather than inputs (such as how much time you spend engaged in CPD) will also help you get the most out of your CPD.

If you’re a member of one or more Professional Institutions you might be required to complete a minimum amount of CPD. In this case you might choose to focus on outputs when planning your CPD whilst making sure you meet the requirements of the relevant Institution.

To summarise, you can improve your approach to CPD by:
- adopting a cycle of reviewing, planning, undertaking CPD, recording CPD, assessing achievement will help ensure the effort to engage in CPD results in maximum reward;
- focusing on outputs (what is achieved that improves competence and knowledge) rather than just inputs (such as how much time is spent on each activity) will also make CPD more useful and valuable; and
- engaging in project based CPD.

See section on Sources of Support and Guidance for CPD

Benefits of CPD to Industry

Professionally competent workers will enhance the public image of the construction industry, which in turn should improve relationships with clients and recruitment to the industry.

Employers, clients, Professional Institutions and Government can all benefit from CPD and the resultant maintenance, and hopefully enhancement, of the knowledge and skills of the workforce.

Employers need to have a competent and skilled workforce for their business to remain competitive. Clients need professionals carrying out work for them to have the knowledge and skills necessary to do a good job. Professional Institutions want to assist their members in maintaining competence as well as to provide an incentive for membership – ensuring only competent individuals are in membership can enhance the reputation of an Institution. Government is both a big construction client and has an interest in the impact the construction industry makes to the economy and the wellbeing of the population.

CPD is beneficial to clients as a knowledgeable and competent construction team has greater potential to complete a project on time, within budget, and resulting in a good quality product. It also helps provide reassurance of competence and can help develop customer service skills.

CPD is important to the UK construction and built environment sector as a whole because it:
- helps eliminate poor performance (and associated risks to employers, clients and individuals – including health and safety risks)
- makes the workforce better placed to compete in an international market and workforce
- should result in skills which will contribute towards a better reputation for our industry, particularly amongst clients and the potential workforce
- should help foster trust in the competence of colleagues within teams.

Industry Schemes

Construction Skills Certification Scheme

For growing numbers of professionals, CPD helps them to gain a CSCS (Construction Skills Certification Scheme) card, through the Professional Membership Route, and thereby access to construction sites.

CSCS was launched in 1995 to create a register of competent operatives and craftspeople. The register has now been extended to potentially include all those who work on or visit construction sites, including technical, professional, supervisory and management personnel.

The main route to CSCS cards is currently through achievement of a relevant NVQ/SVQ supplemented by a health and safety test, with ‘industry accreditation’ available for a limited period after a new card is opened. However, in response to concerns raised by a number of Professional Institutions, CIC and CSCS have helped Institutions to develop alternative ‘Professional Membership Routes’ to CSCS which exempt some professionals from the NVQ/SVQ requirement.

Individuals in an appropriate competence-assessed grade of membership of an Institution which has developed a Professional Membership Route to CSCS, need two references from other members of their Institution (one of whom if possible should be their employer) to confirm that they are working within the role through which they are seeking Professional Membership, and have completed adequate CPD. They must also, in common with all those seeking CSCS cards, pass the appropriate CSCS health and safety test.
Sources of Support and Guidance for CPD

Best Practice Guidance
European CPD Framework and CIC Users Guide to Managing your own CPD

This separate document not only provides original informed guidance from CIC on CPD, but also seeks to bring together and signpost guidance from a range of sources to guide those involved in the construction professional services sector (whether individuals, employers or Professional Institutions). Other potentially useful sources of guidance include the European Project for the Use of Standards of Competence in CPD for Construction Industry Practitioners (EUSCCCIP) and the CIC Users Guide, colleagues, and Professional Institutions and similar bodies (whose interests lie within or outside the built environment).

View the facilities of CIC CPD & Events website (http://www.cpdevents.org.uk) - this provides access to Lifelong Learning opportunities for Built Environment and Construction Professionals. It brings together the event programmes of professional institutions and others-allowing enquirers to search across all activities in the UK, irrespective of provider.

The following are a selection of websites of Professional Institutions or similar bodies which contain some guidance on CPD:

Built Environment Related websites:
Association for Project Management www.apm.org.uk
British Institute of Facilities Management www.bifm.org.uk
Chartered Institute of Architectural Technologists www.ciat.org.uk
Chartered Institute of Building www.ciob.org.uk
Chartered Institution of Building Services Engineers www.cibse.org
Engineering Council UK www.engc.org.uk
Institute of Clerks of Works of Great Britain www.icwgb.org
Institute of Highways Incorporated Engineers www.ihie.org.uk
Institute of Plumbing and Heating Engineering www.iphe.org.uk
Institution of Civic Engineering Surveyors www.ices.org.uk
Institution of Civil Engineers www.ic.org.uk
Landscape Institute www.landscapeinstitute.org
Royal Institute of British Architects www.riba.org
Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors www.rics.org
Royal Town Planning Institute www.rtpi.org.uk

Other useful sources of information:
Association of Chartered Certified Accountants www.accaglobal.com
British Psychological Society – CPD Planning and Recording System www.bps.org.uk/cpd
Chartered Institute of Personnel and Developmentwww.cipd.co.uk
Chartered Institution of Water and Environmental Management www.ciwm.org
Chartered Management Institute www.managers.org.uk
Commission on Intellectual Property Rights www.cipr.org.uk
Institute of Chartered Accountants in Ireland www.icoa.ie
Institute of Management Consultancy www.imc.co.uk
Institute of Payroll and Pensions Management www.ippm.org
Law Society www.lawsociety.org.uk
Professional Accreditation Of Conservator-Restorers www.pacr.org.uk
Professional Development – How 2 www.pd-how2.org
Royal College of Psychiatrists www.rcpsych.ac.uk

Support and guidance can save much time and avoid wasted effort when setting up or revising a CPD system. The EUSCCCIP Framework and CIC Users Guide to Managing your own CPD are intended to provide such guidance and are good examples of a plan, develop, and review-based CPD cycle

Find out more:
To view the EUSCCCIP Framework and CIC Users Guide to Managing your own CPD visit www.cic.org.uk/cpd or see the separate Best Practice Guidance document.